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# Foggy Bottom barrage

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A recent Heritage Foundation conference focused on how the State Department bureaucracy's overwhelming desire to maintain the status quo and not rock the boat often serves to undermine the president's foreign policy objectives.

Well, the striped-pants set's passion for passivity not only serves to thwart the president's will in large ways, but in small ways as well. Sadly, these are often the unkindest cuts of all. A *Washington Times* column on June 11 described one such case: the ongoing effort at Foggy Bottom to keep a group of American World War II veterans from building a memorial to their wartime savior, Yugoslav nationalist leader Draza Mihailovich. The release of a September 1979 letter written by Ronald Reagan shows just how clearly out of sync with the president's thinking the State bureaucrats really are.

Writing to a dinner committee organized to honor Gen. Mihailovich's memory, the president stated, "I wish it could be said that this great hero was the last victim of confused and senseless policies of western governments in dealing with communism. The fact is that others have suffered a similar fate to his by being embraced, and then abandoned by western governments in hope that such abandonment will purchase peace or security. Thus, the fate of Gen. Mihailovich is not simply of historic significance — it teaches us something today, as well. No western nation, including the United States, can hope to win its own battle for freedom and survival by sacrificing brave comrades to the politics of international expediency."

So what does Foggy Bottom say to this? It remains their contention that the erection of a small statue to honor a man who saved the lives of more than 500 American servicemen would "damage relations with a

nation of great importance to the United States." Setting aside for a moment what Belgrade's reaction might be if we were to object to their erecting a statue of, say, Angela Davis, their contention is sheer nonsense.

First of all, by the latest count, the Marxist rulers in Belgrade are going to get \$300 million in various forms of U.S. aid this year alone. Does anyone in his right mind believe that given that benighted nation's economic chaos, its rulers would, for an instant, risk losing that American largess by breaking diplomatic relations over a statue? Moreover, what makes the U.S. Department of State think that the government of Yugoslavia should have a say in what is exclusively an internal, domestic political matter of the United States?

What is even more reprehensible, however, is that in their zeal to pander to the Marxist masters in Belgrade, the fourth-floor elitists at Foggy Bottom have elected to engage in a highly questionable — even illegal, according to some

observers — effort to lobby Congress on the issue, in which they have actually furthered Belgrade's disinformation campaign to sully Gen. Mihailovich's reputation.

More important, they have done so despite the availability of new information which clearly exposes Belgrade's charges against the nationalist leader as the patent falsehoods they are.

In a letter dated Feb. 15, 1985, and circulated to all members of the House Administration Committee (the one considering the Mihailovich Memorial Bill) except the bill's sponsor, Rep. Phil Crane, R-Ill., by Asst. Secretary of State William Ball, the State Department outlined its objections to the move to build the monument. It said the construction of the memorial would be "inconsistent

with the foreign policy of the United States," because the "current government of Yugoslavia executed Gen. Mihailovich after the war as a traitor," that he "allegedly collaborated with the Nazi occupation," that his forces gave priority to "fighting against the Partisans rather than against the Nazis," and that Tito also rescued some U.S. airmen.

What they failed to note, is that Communists always execute their democratic opponents when they assume power, so it is not surprising that Gen. Mihailovich was executed. Why doing something on behalf of a martyr to freedom is inconsistent with U.S. foreign policy, however, begs explanation.

What is truly astounding, though, is the State Department's repetition of the old canards about alleged collaboration by Gen. Mihailovich forces — especially since, according to State Department sources, their Yugoslav experts are familiar with recently released OSS documents which definitively prove these charges false. Also, given the raft of analysts claiming expertise, who inhabit the elitist halls of State's fourth floor, it is incredible that they would repeat the charge that Gen. Mihailovich gave priority to fighting Tito rather than the Germans.

Tito himself admitted (in a 1972 speech) that the civil war against the nationalists was always the partisans' priority. More important, according to captured German documents, and to published statements of Milovan Djilas, among others, a principal Tito deputy during the war and vice president of Yugoslavia afterward, Tito in 1943 offered his nation's German occupiers a deal under which it would be divided into spheres of influence, and even offered to help oppose a British landing, should one take place.

In correspondence on the negotiations, Gen. Kasche, the German commander in Yugoslavia, noted that "Tito had always kept his promises in the past," that the Partisans stressed they only engaged German troops when necessary for self-defense, and that their primary objective was the destruction of the Chetniks under Gen. Mihailovich. While all this information is publicly available, State seems determined to ignore it, lest Belgrade have a snit.

Perhaps the most objectionable aspect of State's unfeeling campaign against the airmen is that time is running out for them. Many of the young flyers rescued by the Yugoslav leader have already passed away, and many of those still alive are in failing health. For them to end their lives without achieving their long-sought goal of offering a vote of thanks to the man who made those lives possible would be tragic. This fact, more than anything else, makes this one case where the price of expediency is too high.

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